The Sunday School Service.

BY DAVID BAILEY.

Dec. 21st, 1884.

The Creator Remembered.—Eccles. 12: 1—14.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.—Eccles. 12: 1.

[*Open the Bible and read the lesson.*]

INTRODUCTION.

A wise and penitent old man, in this lesson, gives a few words of admonition to the young. The language is highly figurative and poetical, reminding the reader of some of the most figurative lines of Ossian.

The author uses the best of judgment in deferring this powerful passage till the close of the address, so that the hearer might have nothing to interfere with vivid impressions upon the mind by strength and beauty of the language.

The admonition is to the young, and the object of the author seems to be to impress upon the minds of his readers that life is short and that there is no time for mere worldly pleasure. The idea that religion is for the old alone, is clearly refuted by this lesson.

It is wonderful that, though this book has been before the world for nearly three thousand years and that it is supposed to have been read by myriads of people in all ages, that the youth of our day are just as slow to profit by the instruction, and are just as much in need of it as were those of Solomon's time.

It seems natural for youth to regard liberty as essential to their happiness, for they look only to their selfish propensities and they fail to realize that true pleasure which Christians feel when young and the blessed consolation arising from a well-spent youth, when they grow old. There must be a tinge of sorrow in the happiness of that man who is converted late in life. Sorrow for misspent youth will often cause the tear to trickle down the furrowed cheek, and it will be so as long as young people look with longing on the pleasures of the world which the wise man discovered three thousand years ago to be but a "breath of air"—"emptiness."

Young man, is it not possible for you to throw off this incubus which weighs you down? Be assured that the time *will* come, it may be sooner or it may be later, when your present indifference will come home to you [illegible] bring wi[illegible] sorrow; sorrow that the [illegible] that you might [illegible] which led you [illegible] isheartened, [illegible]ervice.

[illegible]ndments: [illegible]." A duty [illegible] to enjoyment, [illegible]hat there is en[illegible]xicating drinks, [illegible]h like a serpent and [illegible]der;" and it is the same [illegible] of the passions. True [illegible] bring sorrow, but "the [illegible]seth all understanding."

LESSON.

"Youth." Youth is the happy, [illegible]oughtless time, at which, if the mind [illegible]erly directed, it will never be led as- "Evil days" Times of trouble. "No [illegible]e in them." In the days or in the life. [illegible] have learned to love the Lord in pros- [illegible] you will not forsake him when adversi- comes.

Verse 2. "Be not darkened." The dark- [illegible]ng of the lights of heaven was looked upon [illegible] a token of affliction or trouble. "Clouds [illegible]turn." The afflictions come to the aged [illegible]ust like clouds in the rainy season, one fol- [illegible]wing another in close proximity.

Verse 3. "Here is the beginning of the figure in which the human body is compared [illegible]o a house or mill. "Keepers." The hands [illegible]r arms. In old age the hands tremble. "Strong men." The legs are no longer straight and strong as they were in young manhood. "Grinders." This refers to the teeth. So many have gone that but little grinding can be done, that is, the food must be prepared. "Thou that look out of the windows." The eyes. There is no surer sign of declining years than the failure of the eyesight, and the figure is very good, for it is sometimes said, "The eyes are the windows of the soul."

Verse 4. "Doors." Means of communication, therefore the mouth. The teeth being gone the lips must be kept closed or the food would be lost. "Rise up." The old man is easily disturbed and rises early in the morning. "Daughters of music." The voice is cracked and piping, so that no true music can be produced by the voice.

Verse 5. "Afraid of that which is high." [illegible] a man grows old he dreads to climb to [illegible] height, partly because of stiffness in the [illegible]s and partly because it effects his head [illegible]e than it did when he was young. "Al- [illegible]nd tree." This tree was the type of old [illegible]e. Its white blossoms come out before the [illegible]aves, and cover the tree completely, thus [illegible]much resembling a head covered with white hair. "Desire." Appetite. Literally, caperberry which was used as an appetizer; when this failed to stimulate the appetite, it was considered that the man was about gone.

"Long home." The final resting place.

Verse 6. Several figures for death. Death is likened to the extinguishing of a lamp, the breaking of a pitcher or a wheel. The golden lamp is suspended from the ceiling by a silver cord, and when the cord is loosed the lamp would fall and break.

Verse 7. "Dust." Henry says, "Man is a strange sort of a creature, a ray of heaven united to a clod of earth; at death these are separated, and each goes to the place from whence it came."

Verse 8. "Vanity of vanities." The author reiterates his previous statement in conclusion as though satisfied that he had carried his point.

Verse 11. "Goads." Used in driving oxen. That is "the words of the wise stir up men to perform goods actions." "Nails." Rather stakes driven in the ground to fasten tent ropes to.

Verse 12. The words of the wise are good, but "Beware." says Solomon, "of the other books that are made." The idea seems to be that a young man may wear himself out in studying the many books and be no wiser after all.

From the Bethel Church, Ohio.

The church at this place is in a prosperous condition, under the supervision of brother R. F. Mallott, who is an earnest and never-tiring worker in the Master's cause, and deserves well the praise of the brethren and sisters at this place.

This church has met storms of troubles and opposition, but in the face of all she comes forth more than conqueror, and she stands today on a better basis than ever before.

We had two houses in which to worship, before division took place. These houses were built by both parties, and especially the new house, which was principally reared by our progressive brethren; but the strong arm of the law, through the instrumentality of our non-resistant German Baptist brethren, interferred with our worship in these houses, and we went to work and built one of our own just across the way from the old house, where we can worship in peace and harmony.

The German Baptists seem to be getting tolerably well, with the exception of one thing and that is the *order*. Brethren Silas Hoover and W. Arnold are their ministers, but don't seem to agree very well about the order. Hoover is progressively inclined, as his dress and other external matters will indicate. Arnold is an order man, and wants to be consistent and practice what he professes. He is one of those whole-souled German Baptist ministers that believe that the minutes of annual meeting are essential to salvation as well as the Gospel, and laboring under that belief he has a desire to carry the same into execution. He was successful generally in his attempts in having everything to correspond with the order, until lately he is receiving considerable opposition by brother Hoover's presence; so much so that he refuses to go into the stand with him. Which is the more commendable, brother Hoover or brother Arnold? Brother Hoover presents to his brethren a picture having two sides; one side of which has the heading at the top in fading letters, "German Baptist Brethren," and just below this heading we see the inscription, in living letters of gold "Progression", and subordinate to the term progression we notice on the same side "anti-uniformity in non-conformity;" and on the other side of this picture we have the written order of the church; but brother Hoover never allows a ray of light to present the other side of this picture to his adherents, but holds this side down with the grip of a progressive, and holds progression, and fast fading term German Baptist, on top. Arnold presents his picture with the heading, "German Baptist Fraternity" written in unfading letters. We also find this side of the picture pealing forth in thunder tones: "Away with progression and its principles;" and as soon as he has presented this side to his adherents, he turns quickly to the other side, where we find the order as laid down by annual meeting. And right from this side of the picture he begins to hurl his darts at brother Hoover, and cry: "Order, order! Consistency, consistency;" and for want of the influence that brother Hoover possesses over those members, he fails in his attempt to carry out his consistency, and he is destined to take a back seat, or fall in rank with brother Hoover and his members and their inconsistencies. Now we would say to Brother Arnold: Be a man. Come out on the broad platform of progression, or hold firmly to the order and execute it to the best of your ability, and not attempt to be German Baptist and Brethren at the same time.

AARON HOOVER.

Glenford, Ohio.

My Views about that Convenion.

That something is needed to systamatize our church work has been apparent to my mind for some time. But whether a general Convention is needed just yet, I hardly know. It would be very desirable to meet in that capacity were it not for a few objections.

1st. The expenses will be considerable to us, in view of the many demands for money elsewhere. Our ministers as a rule are too poor to attend a National Convention at their "own charge," and most of the churches that are alive in the work have meeting-houses to build, so that they hardly feel willing to meet the expenses necessarily connected with such a meeting.

2nd. The abuse of such meetings in the past, in the usurpation of undue authorty, has so completely put our Brethren on sentinel against any movement that may savor of a vague possibility of a recurrence of a similar state of things that I feel satisfied, if an appointment is made, the attendance will be meagre.

But while the foregoing facts exist, the fact that our home mission work is sadly neglected, that our ministerial force is not advantageously employed, also exists and something should by all means be done to improve the many opportunities to spread the truth, as taught by the Brethren Church. Now what is that something? The best method I can at this time proprose, is about this: Let the territory be divided into districts. Say take the old divisions as made by the German Baptists, a sect to which some of us once belonged. And let each district hold a ministerial convention in connection with Sabbath school convention, and then and there organize a Home Mission Board. And transact such other business as may seem necessary, this can be done with but little additional cost to those attending the S. S. Convention, and will likely be the means of bringing a larger number of Brethren to the S. S. convention. This will do at least for a beginning and when we see our way open, we may try a general convention. Thorough organzation is essentially necessary to success in any enterprise, and I have felt for sometime that we are deficient in this respect. Now in order to get this matter in shape I will assume the responsibility to say that the Fair Haven church will entertain in addition to the next S. S. convention of N. E. Ohio all who will come for the additional purpose of holding a district convention, say the day following the S. S. convention.

Brethren of N. E. Ohio, What do you say? What will the Brethren elsewhere who have not yet transgressed annual meeting law in holding S. S. conventions, say? All this is submitted to the Brethren anywhere subject to any modifications that may seem good. What we want is systematic work and any way so the work goes on will suit me.

Very Respectfully Submitted,

P. J. BROWN.

Convention? Yes.

Brother Chairman; I feel like offering a few thoughts on the convention question. And what little I have to say shall be in favor of a convention being called and that as soon as the proper arrangements can be made. In my opinion a convention in the near future is very necessary. Several reasons have already been given, and there are still others that could be named. So, considering all things, I think our future success and prosperity depends greatly on our convening together in convention. Brother Crofford's reasons alone would demand the convention. And indeed it may be that he had among others the Conemaugh church under consideration, for we have four ministers, three more than can be supported by our home church. But then, who will go to some other field of labor? All seem to be well situated, unless it is the writer. Well our special engagements with the Conemaugh church will expire on the first of January next, after which we are ready to locate or travel if suitable arrangements can be made; or else settle down in business of some kind. If the latter must be resorted to, we shall gladly comply, by being allowed to help pay the preacher.

STEPHEN HILDEBRAND.

Mineral Point, Pa.

On the Convention.

The motion for a "Ministerial" Convention having been seconded, a question or a remark is in order. What is the design of it being "Ministerial?" If the minsters desire to meet and confer upon how they can do the greatest good to the greatest number, very good; but if the business is to be of a general nature, I cannot see why the proposed convention should be styled "ministerial," or why only ministers should participate in the deliberations. Will the chairman please explain?

JACOB C. CASSEL.

Philadelphia, Pa.

From Lathrop, California.

By request we give an account of the late visit of the committee sent by annual meeting to our State. The two brethren who came were Elders Enoch Eby and David Barklow. The last named resides in Coos county, Oregon. The committee came to us as brethren; we received them as such. They desired to have the church at Lathrop called together; we granted their request. Our church met in council on the 5th of November, about one-third of the members were at the council. After devotional exercises, in which several took part, and the reading of the 18th chapter of Matth., and 5th chapter of Galatians, by request of Elder Geo. Wolfe, the meeting was given over to the committee. After reading of the request from the Oregon church to the annual meeting asking that a committee be sent to California, brother Eby asked the church whether it was willing to receive them as a committee. A vote was taken resulting against receiving them as a committee. Then a motion was made to receive them in council as Brethren and hear what they had to say in regard to their visit, which was very willingly agreed to. Brother Eby wanted to know how many there were, who, in the future would fellowship only those recognized as members, by the general brotherhood. After a number of questions were asked and answered, and considerable time consumed in understanding this request of the committee, a vote was taken, resulting in the decision that the Brethren at Lathrop would continue to fellowship all brethren and sisters, until proof was given that those expelled were disowned upon Gospel authority. Brethren Eby and Berklow, then stated that they would not make a decision, but simply make a note of the result of the council meeting, and return it to next annual meeting. Thus ended the council at Lathrop. It was one of the most pleasant meetings of the kind ever held in California. Brethren Eby and Barklow will ever be held in kindly rememberance by us, on account of their Christian deportment, while with us. Brother Barklow preached one discourse, and brother Eby three, in the church in Lathrop, which we appreciated very much, because we think they were gospel sermons. The rest of their time was devoted while in California, to other localities, of which we have not time to give an account. May truth prevail, error cease, and all God's children be more closely joined to the great head of the church,

J. P. WOLFE.

Lathrop, Cal., Nov. 22.

Another Flower Transported.

Another home in our neighborhood has been saddened by the hand of the reaper, death. Another sweet bud has been plucked from earth and carried to the Lord of the flowers. Another fair flower now blooms in paradise.

Clarence N., four year old son of Mr. Daniel and Mrs Laura Stouffer, died of membraneous croup, on Thursday, Nov. 20. A laughing, bright-eyed, generous-hearted little boy, he was loved by all who knew him. The only remaining one of three buds given them, he was the joy and pride of the father's and mother's hearts, but all the tears and prayers and watchful care of those who loved him could not stay the relentless hand of death. Silently and sorrowfully they went with him even down into the valley of the shadow, and then on unseen angel's wings he was borne across the tide into the Bright Beyond.

"O, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took a flower away."

Father, mother, look not into the tomb as the resting place of your child, but look beyond the pearly gates and jasper walls. Look into that haven of bliss beyond the skies, and see the glory, the peace and joy that is now his, and shall be evermore. Much as you loved your boy, tenderly as you cared for him, he is now dwelling with One whose love is infinitely greater than yours, and whose tenderness and care far surpasses that of human hearts and hands.

You will miss the sparkle of the bright eyes, the merry childish prattle, the morning smile, and the good night kiss, but in the quiet hours of night an angel form will hover o'er your pillows and an angel voice will whisper to you, words of comfort, in your dreams. Sad and lonely as you will often feel without Clarence you will always be comforted by the thought that in that brighter world "so free from all sorrow and pain" he, with his angel brothers is waiting to bid you a welcome, and you can go to them and form again a happy unbroken family where parting shall be known no more.

LAURA E. GROSSNICLE.

Boonsboro, Md.

Perpetual scolding does them much harm and little good.